



## Guidance for Staffing Health Services in Schools

Dear Champions of Education,

The following guidance is offered by the Maine Department of Education (DOE) to clarify the use of additional personnel within a school setting to extend the reach or the ability of the registered nurse (RN) to ensure all student health needs are being met. Specifically, the DOE intends to clarify the limitations of hiring a person as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) within the school.

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School nursing is founded in public health nursing and is defined as “a specialized practice of nursing [which] protects and promotes student health, facilitates optimal development, and advances academic success. School nurses, grounded in ethical and evidence-based practice, are the leaders who bridge health care and education, provide care coordination, advocate for quality student-centered care, and collaborate to design systems that allow individuals and communities to develop their full potentials” (ANA & NASN, 2022).

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This document is meant as an assistive tool. Its purpose is to give a general overview of the types of roles that may be part of a healthcare team within a PreK-12 school. The full scope of activities in the school nurse role is only found in the registered nurse (RN) license. In all settings, nursing activities are regulated by the Maine State Board of Nursing.

A Scope of Practice Decision Tree from the Maine Board of Nursing can be accessed [here](#). A separate [decision tree](#) is available to assist the RN in determining if providing coordination and oversight for a specific nursing task in a school setting is appropriate.

While this document intends to provide a brief overview of school nursing activities, it does not replace clinical nursing judgment in practice when determining the appropriate staff for the job, nor is it inclusive of all activities that occur within the school setting.

### School Healthcare Staff Role Descriptions

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**Registered Nurse (RN)** is a professional nurse as defined by [Maine Revised Statutes, Title 32, section 2102, subsection 2](#). Any RN working in a school as a school nurse must also meet any additional certification requirements established by the state board [Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 6403-A, subsection 3](#).

**A Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)** is a practical nurse as defined by [Maine Revised Statutes, Title 32, section 2102, subsection 3](#). They work under the direction of a registered nurse or licensed or otherwise legally authorized physician, podiatrist, or dentist.

**Unlicensed School Assistive Personnel (USP)** are persons acting on behalf of the school, who do not have a professional license that allows them to practice nursing. They complete tasks as trained, directed, and overseen by a registered professional nurse. This may include a person who



has experience as a certified nursing assistant\*. School Health Office Assistant is an example of a job title for this role.

*\*Because a school is not listed among the approved healthcare sites for a certified nursing assistant (CNA), in this setting they are considered a USP and will receive the same teaching, coordination, and oversight by the RN. They may not use the job title or credentials of CNA within a school, nor will their hours worked in a school count towards minimum hours to maintain certification as it is not one of the approved settings for CNA practice. [\(02-380, ch.5, section 1A \(1\), last revised January 1, 2023\)](#)*

### School Health Activity Based on Staff Role

	<b>Registered Nurse (RN)</b>	<b>Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)</b>	<b>Unlicensed School Personnel (USP)</b>
<b>Health Care Plans (Individual Health Plan (IHP), Emergency Action Plan (EAP), 504 Plan)</b>	Develop, implement, and evaluate health plans. Update with changes.	Implement health plans under RN direction/supervision. Report student progress to RN.	Complete assigned tasks per training and protocol under the supervision of school nurse.
<b>Medication</b>	Review orders and assess for clarity and need at school. Monitor expected student response and side effects. Manage medication administration process in the school setting. Provide training and assure the competence of staff.	Administer ordered medications as assigned by RN per local policy. Report student response and/or concerns to the school nurse. May reinforce medication administration education but may not determine competence.	Administer ordered medications as trained by RN and directed by school administration per local policy. Report student response and/or concerns to the school nurse.
<b>Health Office Visits</b>	Assess student needs and ability to remain in school. Provide care to students with illness or injury. Train staff and assure competence to provide basic care and/or first aid.	Follow structured guidelines and protocols to care for students with illness or injury. Notify school nurse of visits and follow up needs.	Provide help in a limited manner for students with illness or injury (Call parent, call 911, first aid). Notify school nurse of visits and follow up needs.
<b>Special Health Procedures</b>	Assess student needs and determine procedure steps in	Complete ordered procedures per policy under supervision of	Complete assigned ordered procedures or tasks per policy under

	school. Complete ordered medical procedures. Assign tasks, train, and supervise LPN/USP and assure competence.	the RN. Assign tasks, reinforce training and supervise USP's completing procedures. May not determine competence. Report student response or concerns to RN.	supervision of the school nurse. Report concerns to school nurse.
<b>Health Screening and Follow-up</b>	Perform student screening. Perform rescreens that determine referral needs. Follow up to ensure care was received.	Perform student screening per policy, if trained. Report results to RN for referral and follow-up.	Perform student screening per policy, if trained. Report results to RN for referral and follow-up.
<b>Health Care Related Staff or Student Training</b>	Develop staff training following local policies. Complete standardized staff training and assure competence.	Assist with staff training as assigned by RN. Audit medication and procedure records as assigned. May not train students or other staff but may reinforce the education provided by the RN.	Attend training as needed. May not train students or other staff. May reinforce the education provided by the RN.

## Additional Resources

American Nurses Association (ANA) and National Association of School Nurses (NASN). (2022). *School nursing: Scope and standards of practice (4th ed.)*.

Maine State Board of Nursing Scope of Practice Decision Tree.

<https://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/docs/scopeofpracticetree.4.14.22.pdf>

Maine Department of Education Decision Tree for Nurse Coordination and Oversight.

[https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov/doe/files/inline-files/Decision%20Tree.7\\_2022%20%281%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov/doe/files/inline-files/Decision%20Tree.7_2022%20%281%29_0.pdf)

Maine Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Board of Nursing, Chapter 5 *Regulations Relating to Training Programs and Delegation by Registered Professional Nurses of Selected Nursing Tasks to Certified Nursing Assistants*.



[https://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/laws-rules/rules-chapters/Adopted Chapter 5 Rule - Effective 1-1-2023/Chapter 5 Adopted Rule\\_.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/laws-rules/rules-chapters/Adopted Chapter 5 Rule - Effective 1-1-2023/Chapter 5 Adopted Rule_.pdf)